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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7358  
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RUCPDOG/USDOC WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
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INFO RUEHFK/AMCONSUL FUKUOKA 3043  
RUEHOK/AMCONSUL OSAKA KOBE 6679  
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SUBJECT: TOKYO MEDIA REACTION - JAPAN-DPRK  
NORMALIZATION TALKS

LEAD STORIES: Top stories on Friday morning include the conclusion on Thursday of the two-day Japan-DPRK working-group meeting on normalization.

[1](#)1. "Opportunity to Break the Ice" The liberal Asahi editorialized (9/7): "Although no specific progress was made during the Japan-DPRK normalization talks held in Mongolia, the meeting set the stage for continued dialogue.... The fundamental gap between the two nations remains, but an atmosphere for dialogue was created. The talks between the US and DPRK and the start of implementation of the six-party agreement changed the atmosphere of the Japan-DPRK talks. It is clear that the US has been successful in its talks with North Korea. If progress is made on Japan-DPRK normalization, Pyongyang will be able to improve its ties with Washington.... It is too early to be optimistic that the thick layer of ice between Tokyo and Pyongyang will soon melt. This window of opportunity, however, should be used wisely...."

[1](#)2. "Japan Should Stay Alert to North Korean Moves" The top-circulation, moderate Yomiuri editorialized (9/7): "...North Korea agreed to continue talking with Japan due to US prodding. Washington has expressed hope for progress on Japan-DPRK relations, including the abduction issue, and the question of delisting North Korea as a state sponsor of terrorism lies behind the US move. The US has said that it will consider delisting in tandem with North Korea's complete declaration of its nuclear programs and disablement of its nuclear facilities. Both the US and the DPRK seem to believe that improvement in Japan-DPRK relations will be necessary for delisting. Japan, however, cannot

accept Pyongyang being delisted until the abduction  
issue is resolved...."

DONOVAN